

STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

Loudoun Youth Soccer Association, Inc.

Special Exception to permit lighting that does not meet the standards of Section 5-1504 (A)

Tax Map 60, Parcel 16 (MCPI # 192-36-5833)

11.88 Acres
January 7, 2010

I. INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

Loudoun Youth Soccer Association, Inc. is the Applicant proposing a special exception in compliance with Section 5-1504 (C) of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance to provide lighting that does not meet the standards of Section 5-1504 (A) of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance. Per Section 5-1504(C), which is based on Section 5-1504(A) of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant will be applying for a special exception proposing appropriate alternative lighting that exceeds 0.25 foot candles above background light levels measured at the boundary of the property as it abuts adjacent properties. As shown on the Special Exception Plat, the outdoor fields will exceed 0.25 foot candles at certain locations around the property's boundary.

The property that will be subject to the special exception is 11.88 acres and is located on the east side of Sycolin Road, with the Town of Leesburg Airport to the west, the Loudoun County Park and Ride Lot to the north and Bolen Park to the east and south. It is zoned JLMA-20 (Joint Land Management Area – 20). The *rural recreation establishment, outdoor* use is a permitted use in the JLMA-20 zoning district. The Applicant is proposing that two of the permitted fields be lighted. The lighting for these two fields does not meet the standards of Section 5-1504 (A) of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance.

II. JUSTIFICATION

Per the Revised General Plan, the property is designated for Business uses. Recreation uses conform to the policies for this planning designation. The Business text states, "In addition to offices, Business land uses generally may feature housing and/or commercial/retail uses, and all of the uses have a component of public/civic uses and parks and open space. A mix of uses

creates an environment where individuals not only can work, but where they can live and have convenient access to services, shops, and recreation.”

The Towns policies in Chapter 9 of the Revised General Plan addressing the development of the Joint Land Management Area also apply to the property. The following Towns policies support the proposed use:

Growth Management Policies, #6: The Revised General Plan seeks the creation of a “greenbelt”, depending on topography and physical features, around the Towns and/or their JLMAs to assist in maintaining the distinct character of each Town.

Land Use Policies, #10: Commercial retail and service development in Town JLMAs will consist of businesses that are compatible with the rural economy and the existing businesses of the Towns. This also may include innovative recreational or institutional uses or home-occupation uses out of residents’ homes.

The property is surrounded by uses that are complementary to the lighted fields. The Loudoun County Park and Ride Lot is located immediately north of the property and offers a potential linkage for additional parking capacity. Bolen Park borders the property to the south and east. Recreation uses, similar to those that will be provided on the property, are being developed in Bolen Park. The southern tip of the Leesburg Airport and some industrial/commercial uses are located to the west of the property. In a preliminary meeting with the Town of Leesburg Staff, the Applicant was informed that airplanes would not be in conflict with the proposed lighting poles due to the altitude at which they will be flying when crossing the property. According to the Town of Leesburg Staff, airplanes will be at approximately 1,100 feet when flying over the property. To put this altitude into context, the proposed lighting poles will be no taller than eighty feet, which is not much higher than the adjacent forest cover and water tower.

The hours of operation for the lighted fields will be similar to existing facilities in the county. The anticipated hours of operation will be 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weekends. Usage of the fields will vary based on the time of year.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL

The property does contain some wetlands, which have been marked. The proposed lighted fields will not impact the wetlands. The stormwater management measures that filter runoff from the property will meet all applicable State and County regulations. The property has previously been disturbed and does not contain much existing vegetation. The proposed lighted fields will not impact any existing forested areas.

IV. TRANSPORTATION

As stated in the conclusion of the Traffic Statement prepared by Wells + Associates, Inc., “The special exception to add lights to the permitted soccer fields along Sycolin Road would not significantly increase the number of trips generated by the site during critical peak hours. The application would have a minimal impact on the traffic safety and operations along Sycolin Road and would not result in the need for turn lanes.”

V. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Zoning Ordinance contains criteria for approval of Special Exception applications. The proposed application meets the applicable criteria of Section 6-1310, “Issues for Consideration”, as explained below.

(A) Whether the proposed special exception is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

As previously stated, per the Revised General Plan, the property is designated for Business uses. Recreation uses conform to the policies for this planning designation. The Business text states, “In addition to offices, Business land uses generally may feature housing and/or commercial/retail uses, and all of the uses have a component of

public/civic uses and parks and open space. A mix of uses creates an environment where individuals not only can work, but where they can live and have convenient access to services, shops, and recreation.”

The Towns policies in Chapter 9 of the Revised General Plan addressing the development of the Joint Land Management Area also apply to the property. The following Towns policies support the proposed use:

Growth Management Policies, #6: The Revised General Plan seeks the creation of a “greenbelt”, depending on topography and physical features, around the Towns and/or their JLMAs to assist in maintaining the distinct character of each Town.

Land Use Policies, #10: Commercial retail and service development in Town JLMAs will consist of businesses that are compatible with the rural economy and the existing businesses of the Towns. This also may include innovative recreational or institutional uses or home-occupation uses out of residents’ homes.

(B) Whether the proposed special exception will adequately provide for safety from fire hazards and have effective measures of fire control. All applicable fire and safety regulations will be addressed to implement effective measures of fire control.

(C) Whether the level and impact of any noise emanating from the site, including that generated by the proposed use, negatively impacts the uses in the immediate area. The proposed uses will not emanate noise that will negatively impact the uses in the immediate area.

- (D) Whether the glare or light that may be generated by the proposed use negatively impacts uses in the immediate area.** The property will not emit any glare or light that will negatively impact the uses in the immediate area. All field lighting will be focused inward and downward and any light spillage will be kept at minimal levels.
- (E) Whether the proposed use is compatible with other existing or proposed uses in the neighborhood, and adjacent parcels.** With the exception of the Town of Leesburg Airport on the west side of Sycolin Road, every adjacent parcel is zoned JLMA-20 and planned for Business uses. A recreation use is compatible with the uses existing or planned for the adjacent parcels.
- (F) Whether sufficient existing or proposed landscaping, screening and buffering on the site and in the neighborhood to adequately screen surrounding uses.** The necessary landscaping, buffering, and screening will be provided to address the requirements of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance.
- (G) Whether the proposed special exception will result in the preservation of any topographic or physical, natural, scenic, archaeological or historic feature of significant importance.** The proposed special exception use will not negatively affect the preservation of any topographic or physical, natural, scenic, archaeological or historic features of significant importance.
- (H) Whether the proposed special exception will damage existing animal habitat, vegetation, water quality (including groundwater) or air quality.** The proposed

special exception use will not negatively affect existing animal habitat, vegetation, water quality or air quality.

- (I) **Whether the proposed special exception at the specified location will contribute to or promote the welfare or convenience of the public.** The proposed special exception use will contribute to the welfare and convenience of the public by providing additional recreation opportunities for a wider range of users.
- (J) **Whether the traffic expected to be generated by the proposed use will be adequately and safely served by roads, pedestrian connections and other transportation services.** As stated in the traffic statement, “The special exception to add lights to the permitted soccer fields along Sycolin Road would not significantly increase the number of trips generated by the site during critical peak hours. The application would have a minimal impact on the traffic safety and operations along Sycolin Road and would not result in the need for turn lanes.”
- (K) **Whether, in the case of existing structures proposed to be converted to uses requiring a special exception, the structures meet all code requirements of Loudoun County.** There are no existing structures proposed to be converted to uses requiring a special exception.
- (L) **Whether the proposed special exception will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services.** The proposed special exception use will be served by on-

site water and sewer facilities. Public water and sewer facilities will not be connected to the property at the current time.

(M) The effect of the proposed special exception on groundwater supply. Due to the mitigation measures that will be implemented by the Applicant, the proposed special exception use will not have a negative effect on groundwater supply.

(N) Whether the proposed use will affect the structural capacity of the soils. The proposed special exception use will not affect the structural capacity of the soils.

(O) Whether the proposed use will negatively impact orderly and safe road development and transportation. As stated in the traffic statement, the proposed special exception use will not negatively impact orderly and safe road development and transportation.

(P) Whether the proposed special exception use will provide desirable employment and enlarge the tax base by encouraging economic development activities consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Expanding the use of a recreation facility for a non-profit organization is not expected to provide desirable employment or enlarge the tax base. The special exception is expected to provide additional recreation opportunities for all of the county's age groups while conforming to the intentions of the Revised General Plan for the Joint Land Management Area.

- (Q) Whether the proposed special exception considers the needs of agriculture, industry, and businesses in future growth.** The proposed special exception use does not have an agricultural or industrial element that would warrant future consideration.
- (R) Whether adequate on and off-site infrastructure is available.** Adequate on and off-site infrastructure is available to accommodate the proposed special exception.
- (S) Any anticipated odors which may be generated by the uses on site, and which may negatively impact adjacent uses.** The property will not emanate any odors that will negatively impact adjacent uses.
- (T) Whether the proposed special exception uses sufficient measure to mitigate the impact of construction traffic on existing neighborhoods and school areas.** Any construction traffic that will access the property will not have an impact on neighborhoods or school areas.

VI. CONCLUSION

The property is located in an area planned for Business uses and is surrounded by non-residential uses that are complimentary to the proposed lighted fields, namely Bolen Park and the Loudoun County Park and Ride Lot. The development of lighted fields on this property further advances Plan policy through the development of “greenbelt” and “innovative recreational” uses in the Joint Land Management Area.

The proposed lighting will not interfere with the nearby Town of Leesburg Airport. According to the Town of Leesburg Staff, airplanes will be at approximately 1,100 feet when flying over the property. The proposed lighting poles will likely be no taller than eighty feet, which is not much higher than the adjacent forest cover or water tower.

The anticipated hours of operation are similar to other lighted recreation facilities in the county and conform to the performance standards for lighting uses listed in the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance, which calls for the extinguishing of lights between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. With the ability to provide lighted fields on the property, additional playing hours will result in expanded recreation opportunities for all age groups in Loudoun County.

VICINITY MAP

